

# City of Snellville 2030 Comprehensive Plan: Community Assessment

October 9, 2006

*Draft*



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## Technical Addendum

(found on the compact disc included at the end of this document)

1. Introduction
2. Population
3. Economic Development
4. Housing
5. Natural and Cultural Resources
6. Community Facilities and Services
7. Intergovernmental Coordination
8. Transportation

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of this report is to lay the foundation for the update of the City of Snellville Comprehensive Plan. In particular, it provides a comprehensive review of the issues and opportunities that will affect the future growth of the community. This report is based on an analysis and inventory of existing conditions, land use patterns, public policies, and planned improvements. Community leaders recognize that this planning effort can play a critical role in directing growth in a manner that is consistent with the community's vision for the future.

Another purpose of this report is to meet the intent of the "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on May 1, 2005. Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining Snellville's status as a Qualified Local Government.



*Snellville City Hall*

## 1.2 Scope

As required in the DCA Standards, this report includes four basic components:

1. List of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address
2. Analysis of existing development patterns
3. Evaluation of current community policies, actions, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives
4. Analysis of supportive data and information

In its coverage of these four components, this report is written in an executive summary-like fashion so that citizens and decision makers can quickly review the essential elements and major findings of this planning effort.

Most of the detailed findings of this assessment are included in a "Technical Addendum." A digital copy of this "Technical Addendum" is provided on compact disc attached to the back of this report.



### **1.3 Methodology and Schedule**

As required by the DCA Standards, this Community Assessment is primarily the product of a review of City policies, plans, regulations, and development patterns. The study area for this Assessment is the incorporated area of the City of Snellville, an area of approximately 6,700 acres.

This Community Assessment document is the first major step in preparation of Snellville's Comprehensive Plan. The following schedule, **Figure 1**, outlines the remainder of the process. This document and the Community Participation Program will be submitted to the DCA for approval. This will be followed by a 30-day comment and review period by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the DCA.

Upon approval of both documents, work on the Community Agenda will commence. The Community Agenda is the most important part of the plan; it includes the community's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. To kick off the effort, a Community Visioning Meeting will be held in December. This will be followed by the Community Development Scenario Workshop in January 2007. These two community involvement events will provide the public support and input critical to a successful Comprehensive Plan. An Open House is scheduled for April 2007 to present the preliminary recommendations to the public.

Upon completion of the Community Agenda, the City will begin the adoption process, including another ARC and DCA review period. Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is anticipated by December 2007, two months ahead of the City's February 2008 deadline.

Figure 1: Project Schedule

Month		2006										2007										2008		
Ref #	Task	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
1.0	Project Initiation and Administration	★				★		★	★		★	★	★	★	★	★					★			
2.0	Prepare Community Assessment (CA)																							
2.1	Identification of Issues and Opportunities (12 interviews)																							
2.2	Analysis of Supporting Data and Information																							
2.4	Analysis of Existing Development Patterns																							
2.5	Analysis of Consistency with QCO																							
2.6	Review and Revision of CA*																							
3.0	Prepare Community Participation Program (CPP)																							
4.0	CA and CPP Transmittal & Agency Review																							
4.1	Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing																							
4.2	City Council (CC) Public Hearing																							
4.3	Transmittal of CA & CPP																							
4.4	Regional and State Review and Response																							
5.0	Community Visioning & Participation																							
5.1	Form Community Planning Committee (CPC)																							
5.2	Visioning Workshop																							
5.3	Focus Groups/Speakers Bureaus																							
5.4	Scenario Workshop																							
5.5	Open House																							
5.6	Outreach Tools																							
6.0	Draft Community Agenda																							
6.1	Community Vision																							
6.2	List of Final Opportunities and Issues																							
6.3	Future Development Map																							
6.4	Future Development Narrative																							
6.5	Future Land Use Plan Map																							
6.6	Implementation Program																							
6.7	Recommended Goals and Policies																							
6.8	STWP																							
6.9	Draft Document Production																							
6.10	Open House (same as 5.5)																							
6.11	Summary of Comments & Revisions to Documents																							
7.0	Adoption Process																							
7.1A	Planning Commission (PC) Public Hearing																							
7.1B	City Council (CC) Public Hearing																							
7.1C	Transmittal of Community Agenda																							
7.2	Regional and State Review and Response																							
7.3	Adoption																							
7.4	Preparation of Final Deliverables																							
	DCA Deadline for Comprehensive Plan Update Adoption 2.28.08																							

★	Project Management Team (PMT) Meetings	★	Community Planning Committee (CPC) Meetings		Key Project Dates
	April - kickoff		Oct - kick-off / pre visioning workshop	4.20.06	Project Management Plan to PMT
8.1.06	Aug - draft review	10.30.06	Jan - post visioning workshop - pre scenario workshop	4.28.06	Deadline for PMT data to JJG
10.17.06	Oct - transmittal review & public participation kickoff/pre CPC mtg.	TBD	March - post scenario review - hybrid discussion	7.17.06	1st Draft of CA & CPP for PMT Review
11.21.06	Nov - pre visioning workshop	TBD	April - future development plan review	8.1.06	Deadline for PMT comments
TBD	Jan - post visioning / pre scenario	TBD	May - post open house - plan	8.14.06	2nd Draft CA & CPP for transmittal hearings
TBD	Feb - post scenario discussion			9.26.06	CA & CPP Preesntation to Planning Commission
TBD	Mar - future development plan review			10.9.06	CA & CPP Presentation to City Council
TBD	April - draft plan delivery / pre open house			12.5.06	Visioning Workshop
TBD	May - post open house - STWP review			2.02.07	Land Use Scenario Working Paper
TBD	June - post pc and cc mtg - final revision discussion			4.06.07	1st Draft of Agenda for PMT Review
TBD	Nov - post ARC/DCA review - comment discussion - final revisions			5.07.07	Deadline for Open House and PMT comments
				5.25.07	2nd Draft of Agenda for transmittal hearings

## **2 Community Profile**

The City of Snellville is located in southern Gwinnett County and is a member of the ten-county Atlanta Regional Commission. The city is located approximately twenty-five miles northeast of Atlanta and approximately seven miles south of Lawrenceville, the county seat (**Figure 2**). Snellville encompasses approximately 6,700 acres (10.46 square miles). The city's 2000 population of 15,351, as reported by the U.S. Census, ranks it amongst Gwinnett County's largest municipalities. The 2005 Census Bureau estimate for the city's population shows an increase to 18,774.

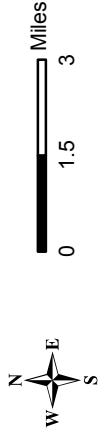
## **3 Issues and Opportunities**

In order to be effective, the Comprehensive Plan must identify and provide workable strategies for addressing the issues and opportunities facing the community. The Technical Addendum of this document is the first step taken towards identifying the issues and opportunities facing Snellville. The data and current conditions detailed in the addendum are summarized in this section into a series of succinct issue and opportunity statements. The list provided here is only a potential list of the issues that may warrant further study during the planning process. It is anticipated that the list will be modified and revised through the public participation sessions, which will occur during subsequent planning phases. A final, locally agreed upon list of issues and opportunities the city intends to address during the planning period, will be included in the Community Agenda produced at the conclusion of the planning process.

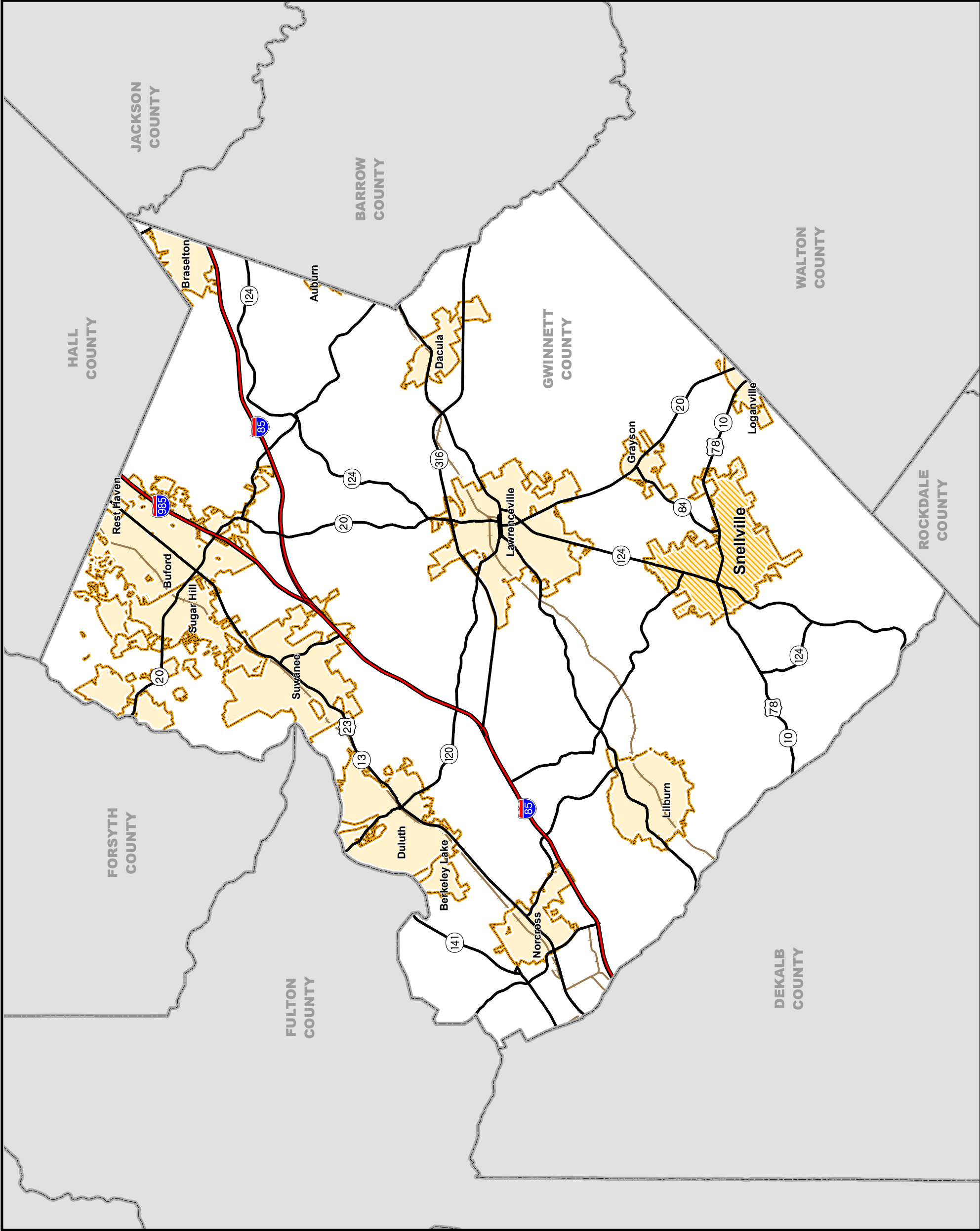
The following issues and opportunities list is organized according to the areas or "elements" of the comprehensive plan: population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, community facilities, transportation, land use, and intergovernmental coordination. The major trends related to each element are listed followed by the issues and opportunities resulting from the trends.

The statements included here will be discussed at length with a Community Planning Committee (CPC) formed to guide the development of the Community Agenda. These statements will also be provided for public feedback during the community participation phase of the planning process. Through these discussions and public response, a series of strategies and implementation programs will be developed to address the final list of issues and opportunities included in the Community Agenda. These strategies and implementation programs will also inform the Short Term Work Program component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Location Map



- Interstate
- US/State Highway
- Railroad
- City of Snellville
- City Boundary
- Gwinnett County Boundary
- Other County Boundary



JORDAN  
JONES &  
GOULDING

Figure 2

### 3.1 *Population*

**Trend:** The city's population has increased significantly and is anticipated to continue growing at a rapid rate. Like most areas of the region the city's population is aging; however projections show that the city will continue to have a large population of young families throughout the planning period.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Cost of New Households:** Family households and corresponding single-family housing development are among the most costly development types for the city in terms of requirements for infrastructure and services.
- ❑ **Competing Needs:** The needs and desires of young family and older "empty-nester" households vary and may compete for resources in city budgets and among city programs.

**Opportunities:**

- ❑ The city is committed to managing growth and development pressures through thoughtful planning. Recent planning efforts such as the Town Center Overlay District, 2003 LCI study and related Master Plan for the City's core are examples of proactive planning.
- ❑ The projected growth of older households may create a market for housing alternatives to the single-family subdivisions that are currently the dominant land use in the city.

### 3.2 *Economic Development*

**Trend:** Although Snellville has benefited from the Atlanta region's remarkable economic growth over the past twenty years it has largely done so without much determined economic development planning.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Commuter Community:** Approximately 82 percent of Snellville residents work outside of the City. In the absence of a continuous sidewalk networks, public transportation systems and additional local professional jobs, Snellville residents have little option but to drive to their place of employment outside the City. As a result of the heavy reliance upon automobiles by workers, the average commute experienced by Snellville residents is 34 minutes. Snellville should strive to develop greater local employment opportunities, in addition to its continued improvements to local multi-modal transportation options.

❑ **Economic Development**

**Staff:** The City has many plans and projects aimed at revitalization and economic development. The City's FY07 budget includes the addition of a full-time staff position for economic development.

❑ **Community Identity:** As a predominantly suburban city, Snellville does not have a discernable character or identity. The development of an identity or "brand" for the

City could help economic development initiatives and provide a tool for promoting the City as a quality community in which to live and do business within the Atlanta region and beyond.



*Eastside Medical Center – largest employer in Snellville*

**Opportunities:**

- ❑ **Economic Development Programs and Incentives:** Snellville has historically enjoyed a robust economy without the assistance of extensive local economic development programs or incentives. As Snellville continues to grow, it may be necessary to create a sophisticated economic development strategy including a variety of incentives to recruit new businesses. Currently, economic growth in Snellville is anticipated to occur in the service and retail sectors, which are relatively low-paying sectors. With the help of an economic development program and incentives, Snellville may be able to recruit higher-paying employment sectors to the area.
- ❑ **LCI Implementation:** Stemming from its 2003 LCI Study, the city has many accomplished, ongoing and planned projects related to downtown revitalization and infill. There is potential for leveraging the recent civic improvements in the Town Center to bring infill and new commercial, office and residential developments.
- ❑ **Traditional Community:** Snellville has a long standing tradition of being a close knit community with a strong quality of life. Quality of life is a key to fostering a vibrant and sustainable economy. Maintenance and continued strengthening of the city's amenities and services will help preserve the city's quality and sustain its stable neighborhoods. Continuing to keep the community safe, and expanding

its parks and conservation areas will also help maintain quality of life and attract new residents and businesses to the city.

- ❑ **Community Events:** Promotion of the downtown could be done with appropriate festivals and events. A thoughtful marketing campaign consisting of advertising and events will raise the profile of the community, and its interest to entrepreneurs and developers.
- ❑ **Fiber-Optic Infrastructure:** A key component of the City's economic development strategy could be the promotion of the area's extensive fiber-optic network. The high-tech infrastructure strength in Snellville is comparable to that found in other metro-Atlanta employment centers and should be used as a business recruitment tool for the community.

### 3.3 Housing

**Trend:** The continued growth of Snellville's population and changing demographics will create many challenges and opportunities for the City's housing market.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Neighborhood Maintenance:** The city has a number of older housing developments; while many of these are stable neighborhoods, there are some instances of property maintenance issues. To ensure the ongoing stability of the city's neighborhoods, continued code enforcement, community policing and property maintenance support programs are needed.
- ❑ **Elderly Residences:** Snellville's elderly population is expected to grow tremendously over the coming decades. Unfortunately, the availability of affordable housing for the elderly is extremely limited within Snellville. Snellville must adopt a strategy to accommodate the anticipated increase in the need for affordable housing for the elderly.

**Opportunities**

- ❑ **Strong Housing Demand:** Over the next quarter-century, over 6,000 new housing units will likely be needed in Snellville. This future demands represents an increase of nearly 90 percent over the city's existing housing inventory. Snellville should take advantage of this opportunity to promote more sustainable growth that addresses the community's commuter nature and strained environment.
- ❑ **Town Center District:** As part of the City's plans for its Town Center District the city has approved a 10+ acre mixed use development, Wisteria Square, which



will include urban style lofts and condominiums that will provided some much needed diversity to the city's housing market.

- ❑ **Signature Community Program.** A seniors housing initiative is being undertaken as part of the Signature Community Program. This initiative is aimed at crafting zoning regulations that promote the development of senior friendly housing.

### 3.4 Natural Resources

**Trend:** Snellville's growth has placed stress on the community's natural resources. As Snellville becomes a more mature community, greater efforts should be undertaken towards minimizing the environmental impact of future growth.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Water Quality:** All four of Snellville's primary streams currently suffer from fecal coliform bacteria contamination and are thus in noncompliance with the Clean Water Act. With urban runoff identified as the likely cause of the contamination, Snellville should consider strategies for reducing future pollution to the area's streams. This strategy should be coordinated with the city's Stormwater management efforts.

**Opportunities:**

- ❑ **Recharge Protection:** Snellville currently has no formal program for the protection of water recharge areas. With significant recharge areas to the north and west of Snellville, it is vital that the City prevent contamination to these sites. Snellville should also work with neighboring communities to protect the integrity of water recharge areas.
- ❑ **Baker's Rock Park:** Snellville is home to several endangered plant species that are unique to the region. Most of these plants are located near Baker's Rock. Snellville should work towards creating a passive park around the Baker's Rock area. Such an initiative would not only further protect endangered species, but would also contribute to the community's greenspace.

### 3.5 Cultural Resources

**Trend:** The widening of US 78 that occurred years ago destroyed many of the original stone buildings located at the cross roads of US 78 and SR 124. With the rapid development Snellville has recently experienced, many of the few remaining



*Snell & Sawyer Store*



historic resources have the potential to be threatened.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Development Threats:** The City's rapid development pace, puts both historic and archaeology sites in danger.

**Opportunities:**

- ❑ **Snellville Historical Society:** The Snellville Historical Society is in the process of compiling detailed histories on buildings and sites within the City and has long term plans to develop an inventory of cultural resources both existing and lost.
- ❑ **History Center:** The Society has plans to create a central location for the general public to research the history of the City of Snellville, its community and buildings.
- ❑ **Resource Inventory:** An inventory of existing structures should be compiled using state guidelines and copies of the inventory should be housed both at the Snellville Historical Society and at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Historic Preservation Division's files.
- ❑ **Ordinances:** Provisions could be added to the City of Snellville code to protect archaeological sites through the development review process.
- ❑ **Traditional Building Materials:** Encourage the use of granite in new buildings as a tribute to the historic building material of the community.

### **3.6 Community Facilities and Services**

**Trend:** Snellville prides itself on providing quality services to residents and businesses while maintaining one of the lowest tax rates in Gwinnett County. However, a growing population which is becoming more diverse brings additional and changing service demands.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Increasing Demand for Services:** Meeting the service demands of a growing and changing population is challenging. The City has more than doubled in size since 1980, and with that growth has come increasing demands for public services. Careful planning and coordination with the County regarding the services it provides to Snellville is required to ensure adequate services are available over the next 20 years.

- ❑ **Stormwater Management.** Snellville has not joined the County's Stormwater Utility and does not have a designated source of funds for a local stormwater management program. A reliable source of funds must be identified to pay for the expected costs of maintaining and monitoring the City's stormwater infrastructure.
- ❑ **Political Volatility.** There are often competing opinions among city leaders which can stymie progress. A unified city vision is needed to move many of Snellville's initiatives and programs forward.
- ❑ **Reactive Citizenry:** There is some feeling among city leaders that local citizens tend to be reactive versus proactive when addressing change in the City. The local government should continue to maintain strong communication links with citizens and civic organizations. As new residents and businesses move to Snellville there may be a need for additional outreach efforts to encourage newcomers to become active participants in the local civic life.

## Opportunities

- ❑ **Oak Road Property:** The city is currently working on plans for a 4.5 acre passive park located in Oak Road's residential corridor. The city is coordinating efforts related to this park with its implementation of DCA's Signature Community Program. The location of the park within a neighborhood and the process through which the City is involving citizens in the park's development is an example of its strong commitment to quality of life.
- ❑ **Briscoe Park Master Plan:** The city has begun implementation of its 2003 Recreation Master Plan which includes many improvements to the city's signature park. The Recreation Department is using SPLOST to fund current implementation phases but will need \$5.5 million in additional funding, which could include the next (2008) SPLOST, to complete the park improvements.



*Briscoe Park*

- ❑ **City Center Construction:** The construction of the new City Hall and Senior Center has provided much needed government and community space in the city as well as fostered the development of a discernable city center. There is the

opportunity to relocate the Police Department into this area which would provide greater visibility for this community service.

- ❑ **Safe Community.** One of the city's greatest assets is its excellent Police Department. The high level of safety and community involvement in the department's public safety programs helps to attract and support new businesses and residents to the community.

- ❑ **Open and Responsive Civic Government.** Snellville's leaders and local government staff have a strong relationship with the City's citizens. There are good lines of communication between City Hall

and citizens and staff and leaders are committed to working with residents to develop creative solutions to the City's issues.



### 3.7 Transportation

**Trend:** With the steady population growth of the City and the surrounding area, traffic congestion and safety has been steadily getting worse.

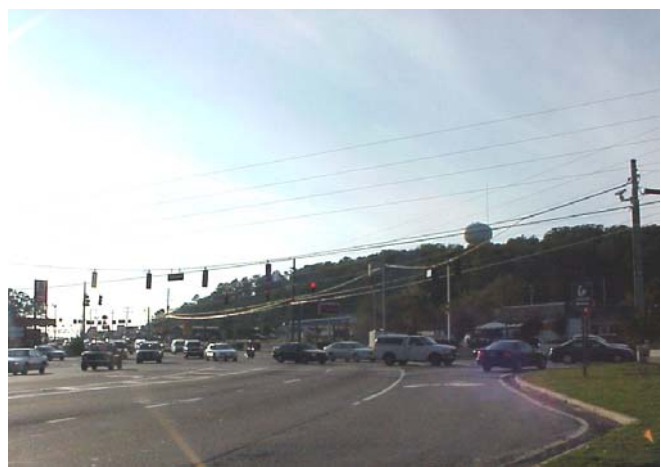
**Issues:**

- ❑ **Congestion:** Find a way to alleviate congestion throughout Snellville, especially along US 78 and SR 124, without destroying the small town feel of the City.
- ❑ **Connectivity** - Find a way to improve connectivity between the various sectors of the city that will allow cross-town movements without encouraging excessive cut-through traffic.
- ❑ **Access Management:** Use access management techniques to alleviate the traffic along the two major commercial corridors US 78 and SR 124
- ❑ **Alternative Modes:** Create new transportation facilities such as multi-use trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks that allow for non-motorized modes of travel and which could improve transit feasibility in the long term.

- ❑ **Safety.** The crash and injury rates on both US 78 and SR 124 are higher than the state average for similar facilities.

#### **Opportunities:**

- ❑ **Intersection Redesign:** Explore comprehensive redesign options not only for the intersection of US 78 and SR 124 and their immediate surroundings but a broader reworking of the entire city network to preserve the small town feel of the downtown core as a historic and pedestrian friendly environment.
- ❑ **Senior and Express Bus Transit:** Though traditional transit service has had very little local support in Snellville. However, there is a need and some opportunity in working with the County for senior transportation and possibly Express Bus Transit to job centers closer to downtown Atlanta. As the County studies and expands these types of transit services, the City should work closely with the County DOT and poll its own citizens to see if it should share in their investment and offerings to their citizens.



*US 78 and SR 124 intersection*

- ❑ **Land Use Alternatives:** As the city redevelops its Downtown in keeping with the findings of the LCI, it will be given the opportunity to alter the traditional auto-centric transportation patterns. By promoting more mixed-use development and by creating a live-work-play environment downtown, the City will be reducing the demand for automobile trips and improving the pedestrian environment.

### **3.8 Land Use & Development**

**Trend:** Historically, Snellville has been a part of the suburban fabric of Gwinnett County, but as the wave of Atlanta's growth moves further outward, redevelopment of the City's older shopping centers is offering new opportunities for Snellville to define itself as a unique destination and a more self-sustaining community.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Aid to struggling areas.** Create opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment in older declining areas of the city.
- ❑ **Quality Development.** Assure the quality of new development to set the City apart from the rest of the County and attract new businesses and residents.
- ❑ **Redevelopment US 78.** Aging and vacant strip shopping centers need to redevelop in order to maintain the City's tax base and reduce crime.
- ❑ **Controlling the amount and type of growth in the Sphere of Influence.** Snellville's planning commission chair works with the County Planning Commission to review rezoning decisions within the City's sphere of influence. The County Planning and Development Department provides information on proposed rezoning in the sphere to the City for review. But greater coordination may be necessary to ensure the quality and surrounding development.

**Opportunities**

- ❑ **Reserve land for industrial and office / professional growth.** Within the Future Land Use Plan, include adequate space for the growth of non-retail employment-related uses.
- ❑ **Encourage traditional neighborhood development.** Traditional neighborhoods developments may not be viable in every context, but they should be required when developing adjacent to or within the Town Center area.
- ❑ **Protect natural resources within developments.** Promote the use of the conservation subdivision ordinance and create and incentive to create greenway connections.



**Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)** – A development approach that fosters compact, walkable communities. The planning and urban design of new TND developments take their form from the structure and layout of pre-World War II (i.e., 1940s and earlier) neighborhoods, with their human, walkable scale and lively mix of uses. TND neighborhoods typically include small-lot, single-family homes, multi-family residences, and neighborhood commercial developments within easy walking distance of one another.

### 3.9 Intergovernmental Coordination

**Trend:** The decreasing availability of state and federal funds requires that the City maintain a high level of coordination with county, regional and state officials.

**Issues:**

- ❑ **Regional transportation planning.** To ensure the proper coordination and execution of much needed transportation improvements, City officials need to continue to be actively involved in transportation planning activities at the Atlanta Regional Commission, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, and Georgia Department of Transportation.
- ❑ **Intergovernmental agreements.** The City relies upon the County for many of its services. As the city continues to grow and state and federal regulations change, the city needs to ensure that proper agreements are in place with other local jurisdictions and the regional and state governments to ensure adequate delivery of public services to its citizens.
- ❑ **Land use conflicts that result from annexation.** The City needs to continue to work closely with the County Board of Commissioners and the County Planning and Development Department to avoid potential land use conflicts within its Sphere of Influence.
- ❑ **Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Renewal:** City officials need to work closely with the County to help ensure that this important source of capital improvements funding is used effectively.
- ❑ **Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy:** As Snellville, Gwinnett County and the other cities in Gwinnett work through the process of updating their Comprehensive Plans, needed changes in service delivery will certainly be identified. Open communication and dialogue with the County will have to be maintained throughout this planning process. Additionally, the cities' Service Delivery Strategy will need to be updated following the Comprehensive Plan process to accurately reflect necessary changes in service delivery agreements. Some areas that have been identified for further study include police protection, transportation and parks and recreation.

**Opportunities:**

- ❑ **Create an Annexation Policy:** Snellville needs a clear annexation policy to define when annexation is or is not in its best interest and to define its expectations for prospective developers. Work closely with surrounding jurisdictions and state and regional planning agencies to ensure that new community facilities and services built within this sphere of influence support the

needs of local residents and businesses and are compatible with the provisions of this plan.

- **Actively participate in local regional planning efforts.** Both Gwinnett County and the Atlanta Regional Commission are continually undertaking new planning efforts that can and will have an impact on the future of the City. The City needs to stay in touch with these efforts and actively participate in them.



## 4 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

In order to adequately develop the community's vision for future development, an understanding of its historic development and existing land use patterns is necessary. For a future vision to be achievable, it must be grounded in the reality of the current environment. This section provides a brief synopsis of the historic development of the City of Snellville, an analysis of Existing Land Use, and a discussion development patterns including the Character Areas of the city and areas which may require Special Attention during the planning process.

### 4.1 Existing Land Use

An existing land use map is a representation of what is on the ground at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, the City of Snellville Existing Land Use Map (**Figure 5**) shows what is on the ground as of June 2006. The map is based on a number of field surveys undertaken in the Spring of 2006, an analysis of aerial photography, and tax assessor data. The map illustrates what land uses are within the City of Snellville and surrounding area. These uses were categorized using a variation of the standard category system prescribed by the DCA. **Figure 4** shows the amount of land categorized under each use within the City.

The uses represented in **Figure 5** are categorized using a system classification based on the of land use categories defined in the DCA Local Planning Standards. The definitions of the uses found in each category are provided in **Figure 3** below. Note several definitions at the bottom of the table only apply to land uses in the unincorporated county.

**Figure 3: Existing Land Use Categories**

Use	Overview
<b>Vacant/ Undeveloped</b>	Land not developed for a specific use or land that was developed for a particular use but that has been abandoned for that use. Includes woodlands or pastureland, undeveloped portions of residential subdivisions and industrial parks and locations of structures that have been vacant for some time and allowed to become deteriorating or dilapidating.
<b>Residential</b>	Property used for housing, includes three sub-categories: Low Density, Medium Density, and Multi-family. The definitions of these subcategories are as follows.
<i>Low-Density Residential</i>	<i>Single-family residential areas with less than 4 units per acre.</i>
<i>Medium-Density Single-Family Residential</i>	<i>Single-family residential areas with between 4 and 10 units per acre.</i>
<i>Multifamily Residential</i>	<i>Multifamily residential areas with 3 or more dwellings units attached in a single structure with a net housing density of 4 to 10 units per acre, such as .</i>
<b>Commercial/Retail</b>	Property where business and trade are conducted. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center.



**Figure 3: Existing Land Use Categories**

Use	Overview
<b>Office / Professional</b>	Properties that accommodate business concerns that do not provide a product directly to customers on the premises, or do not, as a primary activity involve the manufacture, storage or distribution of products. This category includes small single-occupant structures, as well as large office parks with a variety of tenants in multi-story buildings.
<b>Industrial</b>	Property used for warehousing, distribution, trucking and manufacturing which are primary uses.
<b>Public / Civic</b>	Areas housing local government's community facilities, general government, and institutional land uses. Examples include schools, city halls, landfills, health facilities, houses of worship, libraries and police and fire stations.
<b>Transportation/ Communications/ Utilities (TCU)</b>	Areas containing uses such as power generation plants, sewage and water treatment facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, or similar uses. While just a subcategory of TCU, road right-of-way is actually the largest component of the Snellville TCU category in terms of area.
<b>Park/ Recreation/ Conservation</b>	Areas of the community that have been developed or are proposed to be developed for park or recreation use or are designated as open space. There are three subcategories of PRC: Parks/Recreation, Conservation, and Lakes.
<i>Parks/Recreation</i>	<i>A subcategory of PRC that contains areas used for active recreation, such as parks and ballfields</i>
<i>Conservation</i>	<i>A subcategory of PRC that includes areas actively reserved to preserve some natural or cultural resource, or simply held in a conservation easement never to be developed.</i>
<i>Lakes</i>	<i>Water features typically used for Recreation.</i>
<b>Under Construction</b>	Properties that were under construction during the time of the land use survey.
<b>Agricultural/Forestry (Outside City Limits only)</b>	Land used for agricultural purposes such as cropland or livestock production and all land used or potentially used for commercial timber production. Also includes residential uses on 5 acres or more.
<b>Estate Residential (Outside City Limits only)</b>	Single-family residential uses on 1 acre or more.

**Figure 4: Existing Land Use, City of Snellville and Surrounding Area, June 2006**

<b>Existing Land Use Category</b>		<b>Acres within City Limits</b>	<b>% of City Total</b>
<b>Standard Category</b>	<b>Sub-Category</b>		
<b>Residential</b>		<b>3,983.90</b>	<b>59.47%</b>
	Low Density Residential	3,509.39	52.27%
	Medium Density Residential	367.40	5.48%
	Multi-family Residential	92.29	1.38%
<b>Transportation/Communication/Utilities</b>		<b>856.77</b>	<b>12.79%</b>
	Road Right-of-Way	838.97	12.52%
	Other Transportation/Communication/Utilities	17.80	0.27%
<b>Commercial/Retail</b>		<b>582.38</b>	<b>8.69%</b>
<b>Undeveloped/Vacant</b>		<b>428.92</b>	<b>6.40%</b>
<b>Parks/Recreation/Conservation</b>		<b>388.01</b>	<b>5.79%</b>
	Parks/Recreation	262.37	3.92%
	Lakes	70.07	1.05%
	Conservation	55.57	0.83%
<b>Public/Civic</b>		<b>240.00</b>	<b>3.58%</b>
<b>Office/Professional</b>		<b>164.07</b>	<b>2.45%</b>
<b>Industrial</b>		<b>69.99</b>	<b>1.04%</b>
<b>Under Construction</b>		<b>42.07</b>	<b>0.63%</b>
<b>Agriculture/Forestry</b>		<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Total Incorporated area of Snellville</b>		<b>6,699.22</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<i>Source: Jordan, Jones &amp; Goulding, Inc</i>			

The City of Snellville began as a crossroads community and remains that today. The City is laid out in a radial pattern with its center at the intersection of Main Street (Highway 78) and Scenic Highway (Highway 124). Lenora Church Road, Ronald Reagan Parkway, Oak Road, Skyland Drive and Grayson Parkway all branch off these two major streets contributing to the radial pattern and directing traffic through the center of town.

Crossroads communities have always been locations for area residents to purchase goods and services and Snellville continues to carry out that function today. While the center of town is no longer the center of trade, the two major thoroughfares are lined with commercial and retail establishments. These are exclusively suburban in style, catering to passing motorists with large parking lots, commercial signage and easy access from the main roads. Nearly 9% of the City's land area contains a retail commercial use. Like commercial/retail uses, office/professional uses are located along the major thoroughfares. Another 2% of Snellville's land area is occupied by these uses.

Public and Civic land uses comprise 240 acres (4%) of the City's land area. City Hall is located just east of the center of town near the intersection of Main and Oak Streets and is the most important civic building in the city. Emory's Eastside hospital, located in the northwestern quadrant of the city, is an important institutional structure, as well the city's largest employer.

City houses of worship are the largest component of the institutional land use category and are prominently located on the city's major thoroughfares.

Almost 6% of the City's land area is utilized as parks, recreation and conservation space. The City's most important park, T.W. Briscoe Park, is located in the southern part of the City on Lenora Church Road. The other dominant recreational areas are the privately owned and operated Summit Chase Golf and Country Club and the non-profit South Gwinnett Athletic Association, located at the far eastern and western sides of the City respectively.

Residential areas are the largest and most significant land use within Snellville, comprising 59% of the City's land area. Low-density residential is the predominant use within the City and occupies 88% of the total residential land area or 52% of the City's total land area, primarily in the form of planned subdivisions. Approximately 5% of the City is occupied by medium-density residential areas, most of which have been developed since 1987. These are scattered around the city, with the highest concentration along the northwestern boundary. The City's few multifamily developments are situated on 92 acres to the south and east of Briscoe Park.

After single-family housing, the second largest land use feature in Snellville is land held for road right-of-way (ROW). ROW occupies over 12% of the City's total land area and is counted as a subcategory of Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities (TCU). Other TCU uses such as power substations and cell towers only occupy 17 acres, or less than 1 percent of the City's total land area.

All of the industrial uses within Snellville are light industry and are limited in the City, due in part to the lack of railroad and airport access. An industrial park is located, along with other similar uses, in the southern portion of the City. Other industrial sites are near the City's eastern edge. Together these sites make up 70 acres, approximately 1% of the City's land area.

Vacant and undeveloped land is scattered throughout the city, comprising only 6% of the total land area of the city. Several large parcels are available for residential development and an array of smaller parcels along the major thoroughfares are available for commercial/retail or office/professional development. At the time of the land use survey, there were 42 acres of land under construction. Most of this new construction was single-family residential, but a few smaller commercial parcels were also under construction as well. Though the state Local Planning Requirements call for an inventory of agricultural and forestry uses, there are no areas of the city currently being used for this purpose. In short, the City's supply of raw developable land is in small supply. Most of the new construction in and around Snellville will take place in the form of redevelopment in the downtown or along the fringes of the city in the unincorporated area, unless the city adopts a more aggressive annexation policy.



Existing Land Use

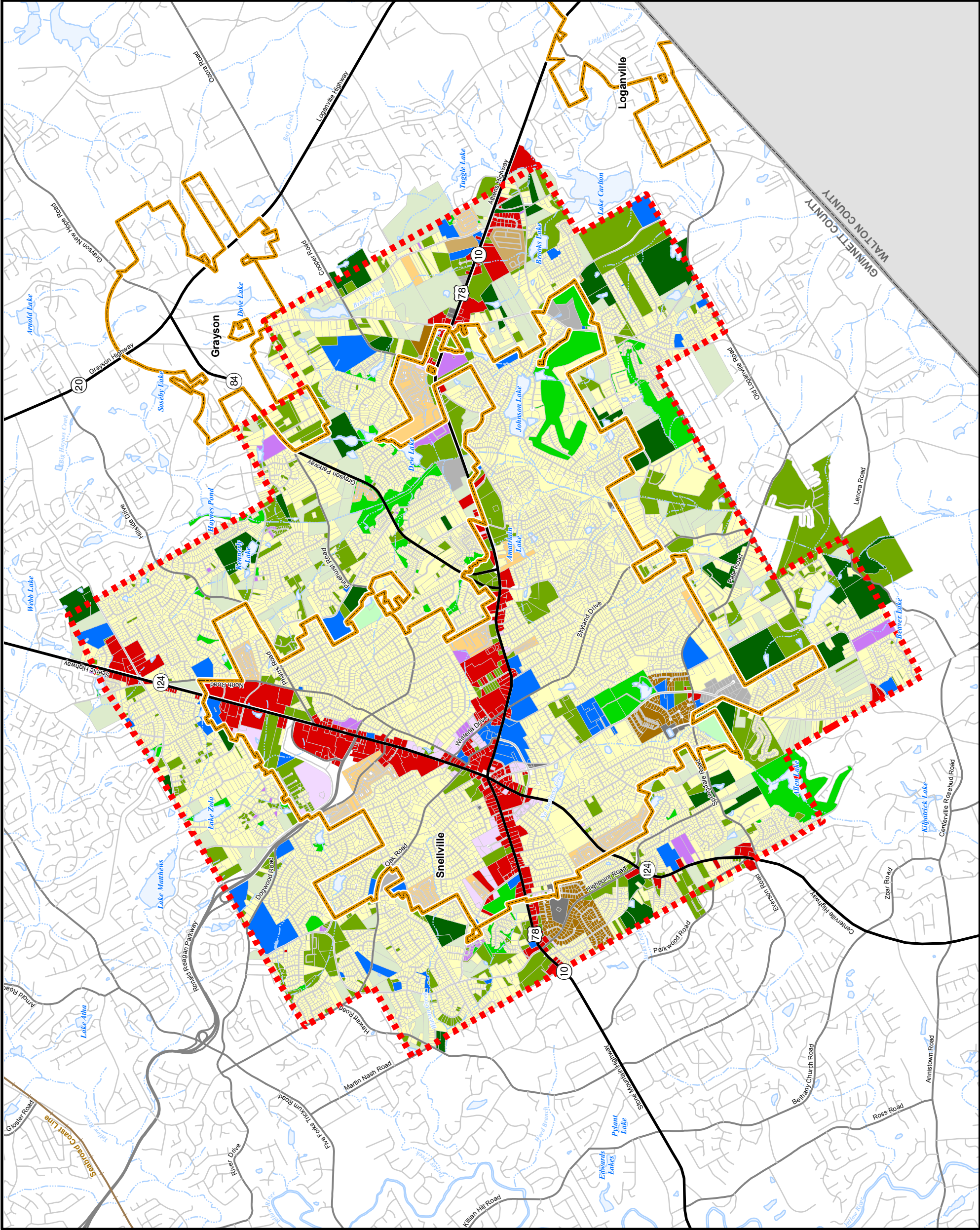


- Existing Land Use**
- Estate Residential
  - Low Density Residential
  - Medium Density Residential
  - Mobile Home Park
  - Multi-Family
  - Under Construction
  - Commercial/Retail
  - Office/Professional
  - Industrial
  - Public/Civic
  - Agricultural/Forestry
  - Park/Recreation
  - Conservation
  - Transportation/Communication/Utilities
  - Undeveloped
- US/State Highway
- Major Road
- Road
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- Sphere of Influence for Snellville
- City Boundary
- Gwinnett County Boundary
- Other County Boundary



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Figure 5





As can be seen in **Figure 5**, most of the land area surrounding the city is built out, particularly to the west and north of the city. The area where annexation of undeveloped land is most likely to occur is to the east along US 78 toward Loganville and to the south toward Temple Johnson Road. The area east of the City along US 78 has been the focus of recent development interest. This new construction is taking the form of both new subdivisions and commercial development. Another area outside Snellville that has experienced rapid development is Scenic Highway just north of the City. This new development includes a new commercial lifestyle center now under construction at the corner of SR 124 and Webb Gin House Road.

## **4.2 Areas Requiring Special Attention**

Snellville's growth and development will have significant impacts on the existing residents, natural and cultural resources, community services and facilities, and infrastructure. This section summarizes the locations of some likely impacts of growth, including areas where growth should be avoided. Also included are areas in need of additional investment because of aesthetics, pollution, or disinvestment. These are areas where future growth should be directed. **Figure 6** displays the general location of these some of these areas.

The DCA has identified the following seven special conditions and requires that they be addressed where they exist within the community:

- Natural or cultural resources
- Areas where rapid development or change in land use is likely to occur
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services
- Redevelopment areas
- Large abandoned structures or sites
- Infill development opportunities
- Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

Through a review of the City's Existing Land Use and the Technical Addendum, the following areas have been determined to warrant special attention.

### **4.2.1 Significant Natural Resources**

The City of Snellville contains natural resources such as streams, lakes, groundwater recharge zones, water supply watersheds, greenspace, and floodplains. The proper management of these resources is important to sustain the anticipated future growth. The most significant of these areas are the floodplains and the groundwater recharge areas.

### **4.2.2 Areas Where Development or Change of Land Use is Likely to Occur**

The City of Snellville is projected to see a significant population increase over the next 20 years. However there are few large undeveloped lots which can be subdivided to accommodate the influx of new residents. Therefore redevelopment of existing area will be necessary; the areas most likely to see change within the planning period include the US 78 corridor and the

Downtown/Town Center area. Additionally, the community may accommodate additional residential development in the outlying areas through future annexations.

#### **4.2.3 Areas where the pace of development may outpace the availability of public facilities and services**

New development and redevelopment can put a strain on the existing infrastructure if not designed and managed accordingly, but for the most part the City has adequate infrastructure in place to accommodate the growth. The one service area, however, that is most likely to suffer from more growth is transportation. In particular, US 78 and SR 124 are already operating at unacceptable levels of service and the continued growth of the community is likely to only exacerbate the situation. **Figure 8-2 in the Technical Addendum** shows the locations of current traffic congestion.

#### **4.2.4 Areas of Disinvestment, Needing Redevelopment, or Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness**

The majority of disinvestment and redevelopment opportunities in the City of Snellville are located on the Highway 78 Corridor. Efforts are underway now through the activities of the Highway 78 Community Improvement District (CID) to take advantage of them. The Hwy 78 CID has already been successful in acquiring federal funds for improvements to the Highway, acquiring SPLOST money for sidewalk projects, and in supporting the Operation Fixing Broken Windows program.

Also located along the Highway 78 Corridor and the focus of much of the City's recent attention, including the 2003 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study, is the Town Center District. The City is actively working to redevelop the NE Quadrant of the US 78/SR 124 intersection into a live-work-play activity center that will provide the city a better sense of identity, help to redevelop downtown as a commercial center and attract new business and residents to the community. The City opened its new City Hall and Senior Center in January 2006 near the intersection of US 78 and Oak Road which will be an anchor and catalyst for this redevelopment effort.

Reinvestment and maintenance of the City's residential areas is also a goal of the community and several aging residential neighborhoods are in need of special attention. One area in particular is North Road, which is parallels SR 124 to the east, and has been experiencing development pressure to redevelop from residential to office uses. Another neighborhood that was identified by local officials was Norton Estates near the intersection of 78 and 124. It is hoped that these areas and other can be further defined and identified through the public involvement process for this plan.

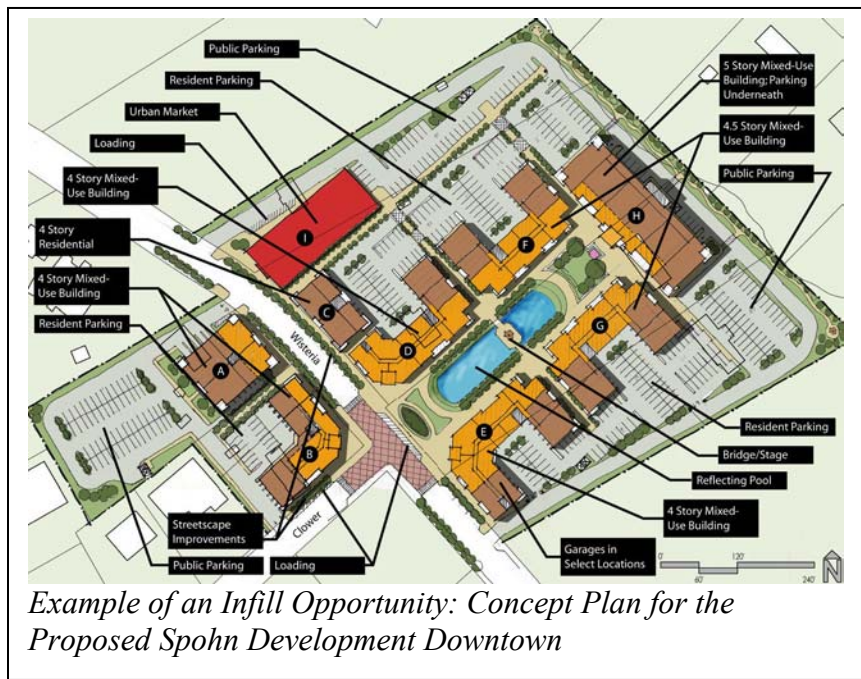
#### **4.2.5 Large Abandoned Structures or Sites**

The City of Snellville does not have any significant abandoned structures or sites. However, there are a number of vacancies within shopping centers along the US 78 East Corridor (east of US 78 and SR 124) and the Scenic Highway North corridor (north of US 78); an overabundance of retail development in the City is a contributing factor to these vacancy rates. Additionally,

there are underutilized, older shopping center along the Highway 78 corridor that may have potential as restoration/redevelopment projects.

#### 4.2.6 Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities

As described earlier, there is a significant opportunity for infill development in the downtown area of Snellville. Placing an emphasis on infill development in this area will create a more vibrant downtown and minimize the impacts that continued sprawl could have on the quality of life for Snellville's residents.





# City of Snellville 2030 Comprehensive Plan

## Areas Requiring Special Attention



## Commercial Vacancies

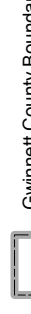
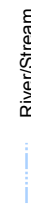
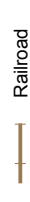
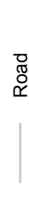
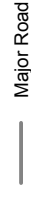
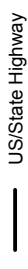
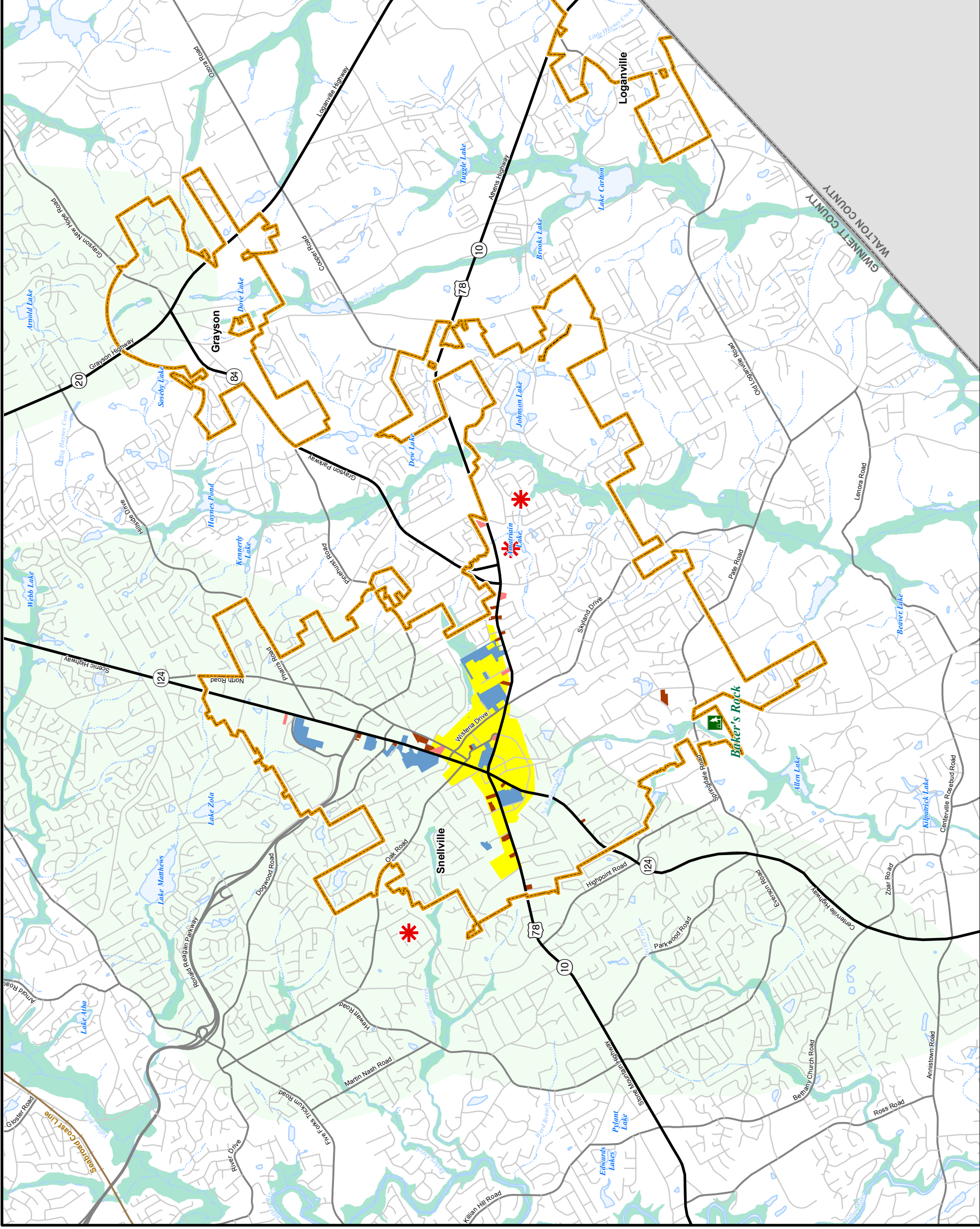


Figure #





### 4.3 Recommended Character Areas

The use of character areas in planning acknowledges the visual and functional differences that exist today among the districts and neighborhoods of Snellville. They help guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each situation. These recommended character areas can be used to define areas that (1) presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved; (2) have potential to evolve into unique areas; or (3) require special attention because of unique development issues.

When reviewing this character area discussion, it is important to recognize that the designated character may not be accurate for every property or parcel within the specified area. Rather the designation is a reflection of the defining character of the entire area. In some cases, different character areas are defined for existing land use and future land use in order to highlight appropriate transitions as the community evolves. **Figure 7** provides a description of these character areas and **Figure 8** is a map showing their location.

It is anticipated that the delineation and description of these areas will be further developed and refined through the public involvement process and various community workshops. The Community Agenda will include a revised version of this map: the Future Development Map, which will be accompanied by description of the appropriate future land uses in each character area as well as short-term activities and long term policies for achieving the community's state vision for the area.

**Figure 7 Character Area Descriptions**

Character Areas (Color on Map)	Description/Location	Existing and Potential Development Strategies
Downtown (Brown)	Northeast quadrant of the US 78 and SR 124. The majority of this area is in the Town Center District, which underwent the 2003 LCI study and houses the new City Hall. The LCI study calls for the redevelopment of this area into a live-work-play activity center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livable Centers Initiative and supplemental studies and funding</li> <li>• Town Center Overlay District to promote mixed-use and traditional urban building form.</li> <li>• Architectural guidelines</li> <li>• Promote pedestrian orientation and the development of pedestrian-friendly transportation improvements.</li> <li>• Focus of public and community destinations (such as the recently opened City Hall and Senior Center)</li> <li>• Promote downtown residential uses.</li> <li>• Buildings oriented to the street and parking in rear.</li> </ul>

Character Areas (Color on Map)	Description/Location	Existing and Potential Development Strategies
Highway 78 West Area (Dark Gray)	Oriented to the Hwy 78 corridor. Characterized by declining commercial and residential areas, traffic congestion, poor connectivity, poor signage, and lack of architectural consistency. Subject of current Hwy 78 CID redevelopment efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hwy 78 CID</li> <li>• Signage Controls</li> <li>• Architectural guidelines</li> <li>• Access Control/Interparcel Access</li> <li>• Operation Fixing Broken Windows Program</li> <li>• Sidewalk improvements</li> <li>• Elimination of reversible center turn-lanes on Hwy 78</li> <li>• Streetscape of Hwy 78</li> <li>• Construct better gateway treatments to the City</li> </ul>
124 S / Centerville Hwy (Light Gray)	Oriented to Scenic Hwy which was recently widened. Predominantly single-family residential with limited highway-oriented commercial uses. No sidewalks except on Hwy 124	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build more sidewalks and possibly a multi-use trail to link to downtown</li> <li>• Build community park or civic uses to help provide better unified identity and community focus</li> <li>• Allow more neighborhood commercial to reduce auto trips</li> <li>• Promote traditional neighborhood development to provide greater housing variety</li> <li>• Construct better gateway treatments into the City</li> </ul>
Lenora Church Rd. (Purple)	Oriented to the Lenora Church Road, Contains a good mix of community uses including Briscoe Park, the Library, Recycling Center, School, Police Station, and new Fire Station. One of the few industrial areas in the City is located here. Housing values and income are among the lowest in the City. Area also contains Baker's Rock, a city Conservation Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better pedestrian facilities needed to link park and other civic uses surrounding residential.</li> <li>• Construct multi-use trail to link park to downtown and surrounding residential</li> <li>• Protect endangered natural resources at Baker's Rock from encroachment from new development</li> <li>• Encourage property maintenance – Operation Fixing Broken Windows Program</li> <li>• Streetscaping program along Lenora Church Road</li> <li>• Improve wayfinding system (signage) to civic uses.</li> </ul>
Summit Chase (Gold)	Very stable, high-end residential area. Country club oriented area – golf course community. South of Summit Chase, there is older large lot residential with a more open, almost rural feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain residential character and encourage property maintenance.</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Country Club and commercial uses along US 78.</li> <li>• Protect riparian buffers along Big Haynes Creek</li> </ul>

Character Areas (Color on Map)	Description/Location	Existing and Potential Development Strategies
Highway 78 East Corridor (Teal)	Characterized by a mix of older and new commercial strip centers. Some new infill residential breaks up the commercial uses, along with some residential conversions to office and commercial uses. New townhome developments are currently underway here.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access management and streetscaping improvements</li> <li>• Sidewalk Connectivity Program</li> <li>• Property Maintenance</li> <li>• Extension of Hwy 78 CID</li> <li>• Construct better gateway treatments into the City.</li> <li>• Better signage controls</li> </ul>
Britt Elementary Cluster (Blue)	Predominately single-family residential in character. Contains South Gwinnett High School, Snellville Middle School, and Britt Elementary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to the schools.</li> <li>• Construct a small-scale neighborhood park</li> <li>• Encourage property maintenance</li> <li>• Encourage traditional neighborhood development infill to provide a greater variety of housing types.</li> </ul>
Brookwood District (Beige)	Well established, single-family residential neighborhood with some infill of medium density residential and office uses. Brookwood High School and Brookwood Elementary located just outside City limits. Also contains Oak Road Park. This area is one of the most affluent, with high home values and incomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to the schools and Oak Road Park</li> <li>• Encourage property maintenance</li> <li>• Improve wayfinding system to surrounding commercial and civic uses.</li> <li>• Maintain residential character</li> <li>• Adopt architectural standards</li> </ul>
Scenic Highway North (Pink)	Oriented to SR 124, and characterized by roadway oriented big box commercial. Includes largest employer in the City, Eastside Medical. Development is new and auto-oriented, not pedestrian friendly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve inter-parcel connectivity</li> <li>• Screen dumpsters and unsightly accessory uses</li> <li>• Signage controls</li> <li>• Maintain architectural standards</li> <li>• Construct better gateway treatments to the City, direct attention to Downtown.</li> <li>• Provide better pedestrian connections to surrounding residential areas.</li> <li>• Ensure occupancy rates remain high to avoid vacant and/or underutilized retail centers</li> </ul>
Temple Johnson Rd (Light Yellow – Outside City Limits)	Predominately large lot residential uses with a rural character just south of the City. Active area for new development of smaller lot residential subdivisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with County to maintain rural character.</li> <li>• Discourage construction of low quality development.</li> <li>• Encourage street connectivity</li> <li>• Encourage preservation of stream buffers.</li> </ul>

Character Areas (Color on Map)	Description/Location	Existing and Potential Development Strategies
Gateway to Grayson (Orange – Outside City Limits)	Dominated by large lot residential with a semi rural character, and well established neighborhoods within the city. Northern portion is oriented to Webb Gin House Road. Area has some connectivity issues. Emerging single family residential development. Neighborhood residential character is starting to erode along North Road as conversions to office uses are happening. Good connectivity in area to North Road but not to Hwy 78 or downtown.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with County and the City of Grayson to maintain residential character.</li><li>• Support large-lot residential development and discourage non-residential encroachment.</li><li>• Encourage street connectivity</li><li>• Construct better gateway treatments into the City.</li><li>• Provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to Downtown</li><li>• Build community park to help provide better unified identity and community focus/</li><li>• Encourage property maintenance</li><li>• Improve wayfinding system to surrounding commercial and civic uses.</li></ul>



City of Snellville 2030  
Comprehensive Plan

Character Areas



- City Hall
- School
- Sports Facility
- Park
- Park

Character Areas

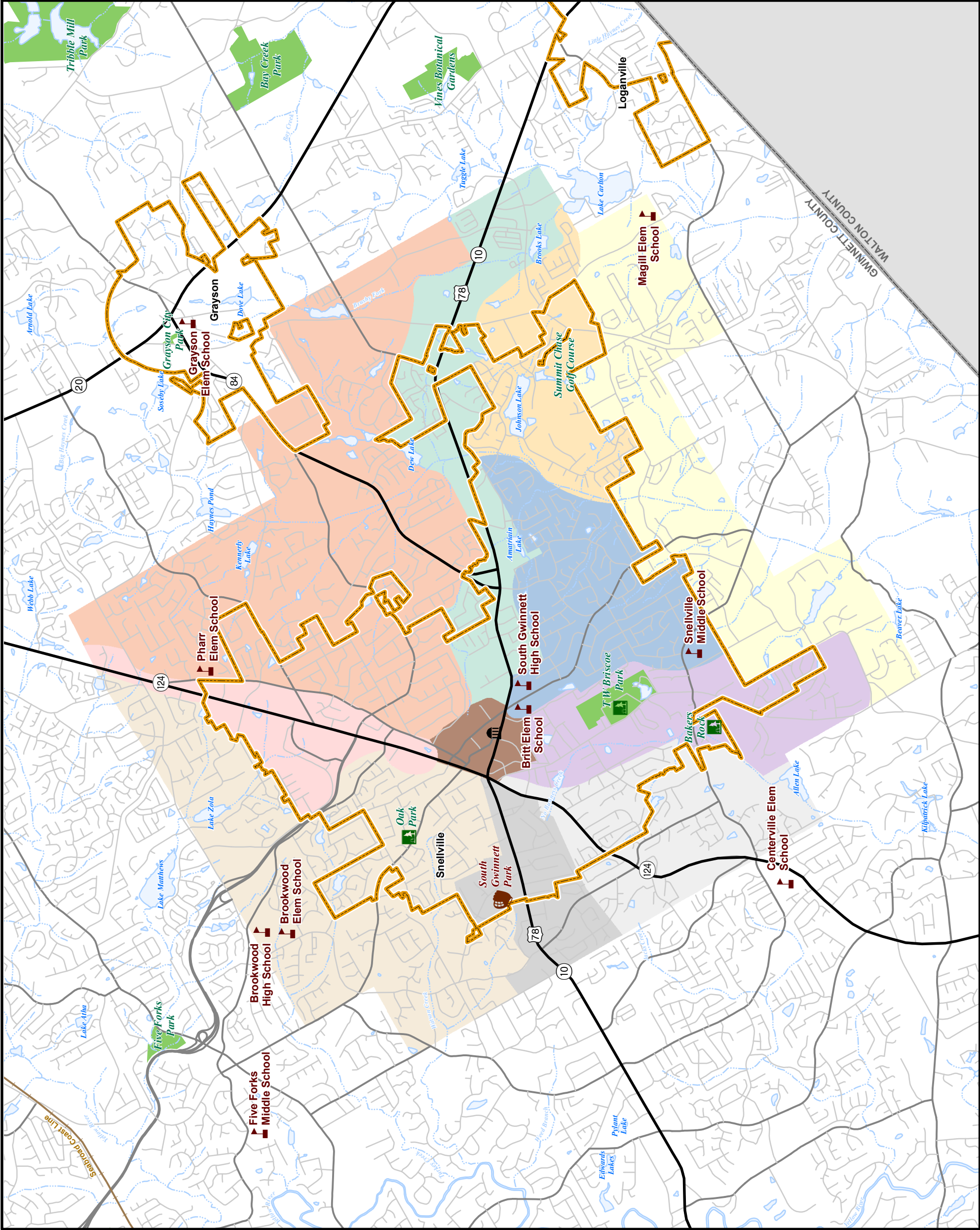
- 124 South/Centerville Highway
- Highway 78 East Corridor
- Highway 78 West Area
- Downtown
- Gateway to Grayson
- Lenora Church Road
- Brookwood District
- Scenic Highway North
- Britt Elementary Cluster
- Summit Chase
- Temple Johnson Road

- US/State Highway
- Major Road
- Road
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- Gwinnett County Boundary
- Other County Boundary



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Figure #



## **5 Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives**

The Quality Community Objectives (QCO) are a series of guiding statements adopted by the Board of the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to further elaborate statewide planning goals. They have been developed based on growth and development issues identified by the DCA as existing in numerous communities and regions throughout the state. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the consistency of the City's current policies, activities and development patterns with these objectives, and to highlight areas where improvements can be made. Potential strategies for improvement will be explored during the Community Participation phase of the planning process and will help form the final "locally agreed upon" implementation program for the Comprehensive Plan included in the Community Agenda. As the assessment shows, the City is already addressing most of the QCO and will continue to do so through the continuation of many current initiatives into the planning period.

## 5.1 Development Patterns

Sense of Place	
<p><b>Objective:</b> Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community. For newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment</p>	
<p><b>Overview:</b> The widening of Hwy 78 and the retail developments along both Hwy 78 and SR 124 (Scenic Highway) have drastically changed the City of Snellville and have shifted the focus away from the City's center. However, through its 2002 Comprehensive Plan and the subsequent 2003 LCI Study, Snellville has begun the process of establishing a Town Center, that is envisioned to become a core business district for the city with residences, offices, commercial uses and civic buildings developed at a scale that is convenient for walking and biking, which will help in creating a sense of place for the community.</p>	
Assessment	Comments
If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	City is working on creating a sense of place through new developments such as the new City Center building and the Wisteria Square mixed-use development
We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	Although Snellville has no historic sites or buildings on the National Register of Historic Places or local historic markers, a list of sites that are potentially significant on the local level has been compiled through information gathered from members of the Snellville Historical Society. The Society hopes to assemble detailed histories on these buildings and structures.
We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	Yes, many of the City's overlay and underlying zoning district regulations include design requirements. The City has also included specific design requirements for designated "high visibility lots" within its zoning code.
We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	Yes
We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	Snellville does not have a guidebook; however the City's current Codes and Development Regulations do provide graphics representing desired design components.
If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	Not Applicable

<b>Traditional Neighborhoods</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.	
<b>Overview:</b> As a City which developed primarily during the post-war era, most areas of Snellville reflect a suburban, auto-oriented aesthetic. However, today the City promotes new development and redevelopment that exhibits more community facilitating and pedestrian friendly traditional design principals.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	Yes, the City's Town Center Overlay District provides for the development of a mixed commercial, residential and entertainment district at the core of the City.
Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	Yes, the Residential Village Overlay District allows for neo-traditional development. Use of this overlay is not by right and requires rezoning, which is a process of approximately three months
We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	Yes, the City's Tree Ordinance specifically requires the planting of street trees in all residential districts. Additionally, the Town Center and Hwy 78 Corridor, Conservation Subdivision, and Residential Village Overlay District requirements require the planting of street trees in these specific areas.
Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	Yes, through the City's Tree Replacement Fund (Tree Bank), Snellville has been able to undertake a number tree planting projects in public areas and has plans to continue adding trees in the vicinity of civic buildings as funds are available.
We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	Yes, Snellville's police department has initiated a "Broken Window's" initiative to help keep the city clean and safe. Additionally, the police department actively fulfills its role as the City's code enforcement agency.
Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	Yes, the City of Snellville Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining most sidewalks and rights-of-ways in the City. Additionally, the City Codes include requirements for property owners to maintain the vegetation to the curb,
In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	This is a goal of the City's emerging Town Center area. Walking is an option in other areas of the City; however crosswalk, sidewalk and right-of-way improvements would increase its desirability
Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	Yes, but more could be done to improve pedestrian safety through improvements to the existing network and the addition of additional sidewalks and multi-use trails.
Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	Yes, but more could be done to improve bicyclist safety through the construction of bike lanes, and multi-use trails.
Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community	Yes, there are three Gwinnett County public schools located in Snellville; all are located in close proximity to neighborhoods. Additionally, several are located just outside the City limits.



<b>Infill Development</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.	
<b>Overview:</b> As a predominantly built out community, infill development is key to increasing the vitality and vibrancy of the City, and most of the City's codes support infill development.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development	Yes, the City completed such an inventory in May 2006.
Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment	There are no known brownfields in Snellville.
Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment	Yes, the City in coordination with the Hwy 78 CID is actively working to redevelop a number of old strip style shopping centers in the City.
We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	Yes, the City's Corridor and Town Center Overlay Districts promote development of this kind.
Our community allows small lot development (5,000 sq. ft. or less) for some units.	Yes, most of the city's non residential zoning districts allow for small lots, including the Civic / Institutional, Neighborhood Business, General Business, Highway Service Business districts, and the Town Center Overlay District. The Residential Village, Conservation Subdivision, and Townhome districts have no minimum lot size.

Transportation Alternatives	
<b>Objective:</b> Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.	
<b>Overview:</b> Through recent planning efforts, Snellville is developing a greater understanding of the necessity of multi-modal transportation options. In support of this, many of the City's recent and planned transportation improvement projects are pedestrian-oriented. While there is currently a low level of support for transit in the community, there are long range plans for park and ride lots in the City.	
Assessment	Comments
We have public transportation in our community.	No, three local route were included in the original 2001 plans for the Gwinnett County Transit service, but none have been implemented to date.
We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	The City's Development Regulations require new developments to connect with existing street networks. Multiple points of entry/exit are required for larger developments.
We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	The City has a good network of sidewalks; however, connectivity could be improved to allow for walking to be a viable option for reaching more destinations.
We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	Yes
We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks whenever possible.	Yes
We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Yes, there are plans for bicycle trail on Lenora Church Road to connect to the City's major recreation facility, Briscoe Park.
We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas whenever possible.	The City's Parking and Load Requirements allow for shared parking when the associated primary development will not be used on Sundays or at night. There may be opportunities to develop additional shared parking requirements, especially in the City's overlay districts.

<b>Regional Identity</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.	
<b>Overview:</b> Snellville is well linked to the character of the Atlanta metropolitan region through its development pattern, retail offerings, and the presence of a major medical facility.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Yes, Snellville is similar to many other suburban Atlanta communities developed during the same era.
Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	Not Applicable. There is no significant agricultural activity within Snellville or the Atlanta metropolitan area today.
Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	Yes, as a well established small city in the Atlanta region, Snellville strives to promote and preserve locally owned and operated businesses. With the City's abundance of national retail chains, this is an area that could be improved further and is one goal of the LCI study.
Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	No.
Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Tourism is not a principle economic driver in Snellville. The City is more focused on promoting itself as a location to work, shop, and recreate to other Atlanta area residents.
Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	Yes, Snellville is home to the regionally significant medical facility, Emory Eastside Medical Center. The City is also the cultural center of southern Gwinnett, and provides numerous commercial, entertainment, and cultural opportunities for county residents. The Snellville area is also the home of several prominent schools, including South Gwinnett and Brookwood High Schools.

## 5.2 Resource Conservation

Heritage Preservation	
<b>Objective:</b> The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	
<b>Overview:</b> Heritage Preservation has become a sense of pride for many members of the Snellville community. The Snellville Historical Society, founded in 1996, has been actively documenting the local history of Snellville's citizens, businesses, schools, churches, and homes. The Historical Society has a growing membership of approximately 136 members as of 2006.	
Assessment	Comments
We have designated historic districts in our community.	None identified
We have an active historic preservation commission.	Not needed, few eligible historic buildings remain in Snellville. An active Historic Preservation Society is documenting and researching local history and existing structures
We want new development to complement our historic development	Using local, historically used materials such as granite in new development should be encouraged. LCI district attempts to establish a more historical town layout.

Open Space Preservation	
<b>Objective:</b> New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.	
<b>Overview:</b> The City has initiated programs and adopted measure to enhance access to open space and the conservation of green space for the enjoyment of all citizens and visitors.	
Assessment	Comments
Our community has a green space plan.	As a nearly built out municipality, Snellville has a limited supply of areas available for green space preservation. However, the City actively identifies and pursues the ownership of areas appropriate for conservation and recreation development. Additionally, the City promotes conservation of green spaces through the requirements of various zoning districts.
Our community is actively preserving green space, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Yes, Snellville uses both methods to preserve green spaces in the City.
We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	The City has pursued assistance from state entities and the Gwinnett Open Land Trust to help preserve natural resources, such as Bakers Rock, a 30-acre granite outcrop that is home to many endangered plant species.
We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	Yes, Snellville's Conservation Subdivision Overlay District requires the preservation of open spaces in perpetuity through the use of conservation easements that meet the standards of O.C.G.A. Section 44-5-60

<b>Environmental Protection</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.	
<b>Overview:</b> Through its municipal code, development regulations, and zoning ordinance Snellville has established a strong commitment to environmental protection.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Yes, the City's Comprehensive Plan serves as an inventory of Snellville's natural resources.
We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	Yes, information included in the Comprehensive Plan has informed the City's development ordinances and led to the adoption of environmental ordinances that regulate development in flood plains, and establish stream buffers. Additionally, the City's zoning code requires the conservation of green space in a number of residential and mixed-use areas.
We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Yes.
Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	With the exception of regulations for Groundwater Recharge Areas, the City has adopted ordinances that comply with all applicable sections Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Planning Criteria
Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced	Yes, the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance is enforced by the City Arborist. The City's current Director of Planning and Zoning is a certified arborist and fulfills this role with the assistance of the City Planners and development inspectors.
Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	Yes, the City's Tree Preservation and Landscape Ordinances outlines tree planning requirements for development sites.
We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development	Yes, the City's Development Regulations include provisions for stormwater management.
We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	Yes, to the extent applicable; Snellville has adopted land development regulations which steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains and stream buffer areas.

### 5.3 Social and Economic Development

Growth Preparedness	
<b>Objective:</b> Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs	
<b>Overview:</b> Snellville has a strong track record of community planning which it is continuing through the current Comprehensive Plan Update process. City staff and leaders continually revisit plan documents and use them as a primary tool for community decision making.	
Assessment	Comments
We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Yes
Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	No. However through the Comprehensive Plan process, there will be an opportunity to share and discuss the city's current projections with the County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community	Yes
We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	Yes
We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	Yes, but it will need to be updated to be consistent with projections
We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	Yes. However as Snellville is an older community, it is primarily built-out. Therefore redevelopment is the primary focus of community driven efforts. Additionally, due to the built-out nature of the city there are few natural resources to which development poses a danger.
We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Yes
We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	Yes, the Snellville Planning and Development Department maintains a webpage with information related to development in the city. Additionally, there are brochures on a number of development related topics available to the public.
We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	Yes, the all agendas and minutes for Planning Commission, Board of Appeals, and City Council meetings are posted on the City's website. The Planning & Development Department also utilized an e-mail distribution list to notify the public of such issues.
We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process	Yes, an expansive Community Participation Program has been developed for the planning process, including the use of flyers, and website updates.

<b>Appropriate Businesses</b>	
<p><b>Objective:</b> The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>Overview:</b> Snellville is fortunate to be the local medical and retail center for southern Gwinnett County. Eastside Medical Center is the City's largest employer and serves as a magnet for other medical offices and facilities. In like fashion, the large massing of "big box" commercial and retail space along Scenic Highway attracts more retail and supportive services to the City. However, most Snellville residents are employed in the "Management, Professional and Related" or the "Sales and Office" categories, so there is some unmet need for additional professional jobs in the City. The City and local economic development organizations are working to recruit these types of businesses to the City.</p>	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	The Downtown Development Authority is active in the implementation of the mixed-use Town Center project as described in the LCI. There is no "Business Development Strategy" report.
Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	The mixed-use Town Center promotes a balance of business types. Also, the Hwy 78 CID addresses the imbalance of retail to other business types. The CID recommends a reduction of retail development along the corridor.
We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	Yes

<b>Employment Options</b>	
<p><b>Objective:</b> A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.</p>	
<p><b>Overview:</b> Retail jobs are the predominant employment option in Snellville, however the residents of the city are primarily employed in professional and office jobs. While there are a number of healthcare and professional services related jobs available in the City, local organizations are working to develop a greater balance of employment options in Snellville.</p>	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	The Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce addresses this need.
Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Yes, however the recruitment of additional jobs in skilled labor fields would assist in creating additional local employment opportunities for Snellville residents.
Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Yes
Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Yes, to some extent. However the recruitment of additional jobs of this nature would assist in creating additional local employment opportunities for Snellville's well educated and highly skilled residents.



<b>Housing Choices</b>	
<p><b>Objective:</b> A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.</p>	
<p><b>Overview:</b> A range of housing size, cost, and density is provided in Snellville. Housing costs in Snellville are less than in Gwinnett County. There are multi-family developments and new townhomes are currently being constructed. However, it is still not possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community. There is a shortage of affordable housing in Snellville. Also, there is a need for more housing for special populations, especially for homeless persons and victims of domestic violence.</p>	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	No.
People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	Housing in Snellville is relatively affordable for most members of the local workforce, lower paying retail and service jobs which are growing in Snellville may not provide wages high enough for individuals to own a home in the City.
Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	Yes.
We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	The Town Center Overlay District, which encompasses most of the City's center, attempts to establish a more historical town layout. Several new residential developments outside the downtown area are also built to traditional standards.
We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	Yes, loft style residences are permitted in the Town Center Overlay District, and the Wisteria Square project under development in this district will include a number of these units. The City's Village Overlay district promotes traditional development focused on a central square and connected through a grid street network.
We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	There are some vacant parcels appropriate for residential development within the City; however none are currently zoned to permit multifamily residences.
We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	Yes, multifamily residences are permissible in a number of the City's zoning districts.
We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	Currently, there are no such organizations in Snellville.
We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	There are several organizations that work on housing for persons with special needs. However, there is evidence of some unmet need for emergency shelter and low income housing
We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	While there is no minimum lot area in several of the residential zoning districts, a minimum floor area of 1,700 sq. ft. is required for single family residences and 1,200 sq. ft. for townhomes.

<b>Educational Opportunities</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.	
<b>Overview:</b> Snellville is home to some excellent schools in the Gwinnett County public school system and there are a wealth of job specific and higher education opportunities available in the Snellville area.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	Gwinnett Technical College provides many training options for the residents of Snellville. There are also two private business schools in Gwinnett, the Asher School of Business in Norcross and the Gwinnett College of Business in Lilburn. For those seeking basic job training opportunities, there are also programs available in the County, through Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Gwinnett Senior Services, Gwinnett Correctional Institute, and the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS).
Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Yes. However, the need to recruit additional professional jobs to the city has been recognized. The City is the center of medical services in south Gwinnett, and the need for more medical workforce training has been identified.
Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Yes, the University of Georgia and Perimeter College offer degree programs in Arts, Sciences, Business, Education and Nursing through the Gwinnett University Center, which is located off of GA Highway 316 and Collins Hill Road, just north of Lawrenceville. A brand new institution, Georgia Gwinnett College, also opened in 2006 at the Gwinnett University Center.
Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Yes, there are a number of opportunities in Snellville and the surrounding area. However, there appears to be an unmet need for additional professional job opportunities.

## 5.4 Governmental Relations

Regional Solutions	
<b>Objective:</b> Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.	
<b>Overview:</b> Snellville has developed and seeks to continually foster its relationships with other local governments and regional institutions. The City is cognizant of the need to work with other entities to address regional problems such as traffic.	
Assessment	Comments
We participate in regional economic development organizations. .	Yes, Snellville works closely with the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and the Hwy 78 CID.
We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues	Yes, the City coordinates with the ARC, Gwinnett County, DNR, NGWMD and other entities to address environmental issues.
We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	Yes, the City coordinates with Gwinnett County on a number of services.
Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Yes, the City has a designated “sphere of influence” outside its borders in which it reviews and comments on development issues.

<b>Regional Cooperation</b>	
<b>Objective:</b> Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.	
<b>Overview:</b> Snellville has continually worked with Gwinnett County, other local municipalities and regional institutions to address issues that affect the city and areas beyond its borders.	
<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Comments</b>
We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	No, Snellville has chosen to develop its plan separately from Gwinnett County. However, the City's plans will be coordinated with the County plan.
We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy	Through the Comprehensive Plan process, opportunities to update the SDS are being identified. It is anticipated that the City will work with the County to update agreements as needed towards the end of the planning process.
We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies	Yes, Snellville City Government coordinates with the ARC, Hwy 78 CID, Snellville Downtown Development Authority, Gwinnett County Planning Commission, Gwinnett Municipal Association, the Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau and other local and regional institutions. Additionally, Snellville actively partners with the Clean Air Campaign, Clean Water Campaign, and Georgia Urban Forest Council to address environmental quality issues. Communication with the Gwinnett County Public Schools is one area where improvements can be made.
We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	Yes. Snellville is able to make regular contact with neighboring jurisdictions through the Georgia Municipal Association, the Gwinnett Municipal Association, the Metro Atlanta Mayors' Association, the Gwinnett Planning Committee, among other groups.